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ABSTRACT

This guide is designed to help home tutors in New Zealand who are working with adult learners of English as a Second Language in need of basic literacy training. This audience includes preliterate and semi-literate individuals, as well as individuals literate in a non-Latin alphabet language. After an introductory section, the second section offers hints on planning and conducting lessons, and notes on adult learner characteristics and language needs. The third section contains pre-reading exercises for auditory perception and visual discrimination. Section 4 outlines aims, needs, and several approaches and techniques for teaching reading, and the subsequent section offers similar information for writing instruction. The sixth section presents ideas for creating or using readily available items as instructional materials. The final section contains a list of questions the tutor can ask himself at the end of a lesson, a checklist to assess student progress, and a list of additional resources. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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TEACHING LITERACY IN HOME TUTORING

ANNE-MARIE NGAN

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Teaching Literacy in Home Tutoring

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Introduction

This resource kit is designed to help home tutors who are working with adult learners of English as a second language (ESL) who need basic literacy training.

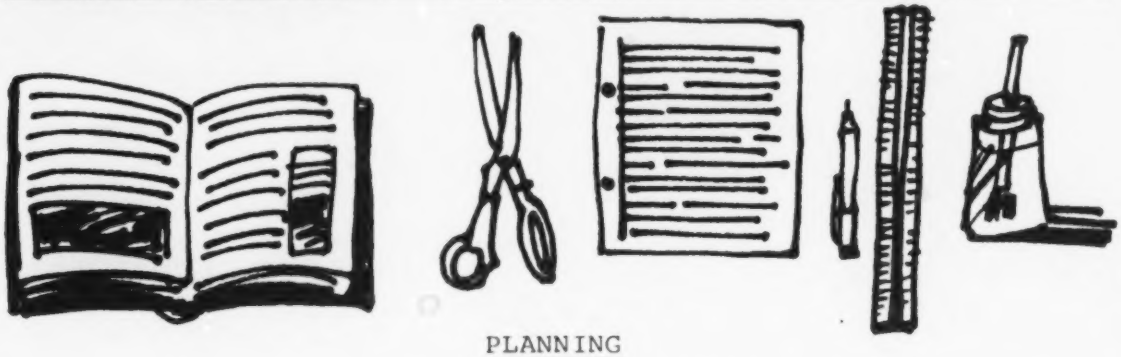
There are at least three categories of students who may benefit from this training :

1. Pre-literates who possess no reading and writing skills in any language.
2. Semi-literates who have had three or four years of formal education and possess minimal literacy skills in English or their own language.
3. Non-Latin alphabetic literates who are fully literate in their language but need to learn the formation of the Latin alphabet.

All these learners need to read and write in English to be able to participate in New Zealand society. They have already mastered their native language and are starting to learn a second or third. The approach to teaching E.S.L. to an adult learner with its emphasis on listening and speaking is basically the same whether the student is literate or not.

Because time is short in the home tutoring situation the task for tutors is to give our learners a foundation of essential English, which will be of immediate use for coping with life in N.Z.

Tutor Notes



PLANNING

Before planning a programme for pre-literates, you should ask yourself:

What do I know about the students?
What are their immediate and long-term needs in reading and writing?
What techniques shall I use?
What suitable teaching and learning materials are available?

Preparing a lesson

Prepare your lessons. If you keep to a routine in your lessons, your student will not become confused. A student needs to know what is happening and what he or she has to do during the lesson.

Parts to a home tutor lesson

Here are some suggestions for parts to your lesson.

1. Social chat.
2. Revision and homework.
3. Introduce new learning
   - Listening and speaking
   - Vocabulary
   - Reading and writing*
4. Practise new learning
5. Check
6. Set follow-up activities for homework

* Reading and writing are the focus of this booklet. Other books have suggestions for the rest of the lesson.

The next page has a sample from a tutor's workbook plan. You could use it to plan a lesson of your own.

Tutor's Workbook

Lesson	Topic	Vocabulary	Listening & Speaking	Reading & Writing	Aids	Follow-up Activities	Teaching Note
3	Street Signs	WAIT/CROSS NOW BUS STOP IN OUT	'Where's the bus stop?' 'Over there.' 'Round the corner.'	Reading signs on sight. Copies words into her workbook.	flashcards pictures photos drawing of city street colour cards	Tape and matching exercise	Needs more help with pronunciation of BUS STOP
4.	More street signs	MEN/WOMEN ENTRY/EXIT STOP. TOILET	'Where's the toilet please?' 'There.' 'At the back.'	Reads the flashcards till she can pick them out from a group of cards.	Picturecards photos Last week's flashcards games	Game-'Odd Man Out'. Role play asking questions.	Now knows that IN/OUT mean the same as ENTRY/EXIT. She needs a lot of revision in sight work recognition especially MEN/WOMEN/TOILET.
5.							

REMINDERS

Your Learner

Find out who your learner is in respect of culture, language, educational opportunities, occupation and interests.

Goals

Before teaching the listening, speaking, reading, writing skills look at the learner's own goals, not at goals you think he or she should have. In order to feel some sense of progress, it is important to define realistic short term objectives.

Methods

Use methods which guarantee initial success. Through success comes confidence and trust. Because one method will not always produce equally good results, explore various teaching methods. Most importantly, match your teaching strategies to the student's preferred ways of learning and learning speed.

Don't spend more than fifteen minutes on any one activity. Change the pace and introduce an easier activity.

Revision

Presume that your student forgets just about everything the first time you teach it. Repeat and revise constantly and always build onto what is already known and remembered.

Aids and Resources

Make use of resources and visual aids that will help your student learn rather than be a distraction.

The Learner

BACKGROUND

* An adult learner brings an experience of living which is a good basis for relating to new ideas.

* The E.S.L. student has been through the process of learning a language once, and can already use language for many purposes.

* E.S.L. adults are self-motivated and willing to apply themselves readily. This interest must be kept alive.

* E.S.L. adults are realistic and have needs which are immediate and concrete.

* Through years of living, the adult has acquired a 'set pattern' of behaviour which includes having his or her own ideas about learning.

* The adult's readiness to learn and to concentrate on what is new, will depend on an ability to follow a routine.

* Adult learners have difficulty in remembering isolated facts. They need to develop memory and make it work for them.

* Pre-literate adults often have little self-confidence in their ability to learn. They need to learn how to learn.

* Adults are impatient in pursuit of objectives and suffer if they do not see success coming.

Case Histories

Shao Tse Tso is a Chinese married woman, aged 34, whose husband works as a kitchen hand in a take-away bar. They have three children aged between two and nine. Shao Tse has a limited command of oral English but is a speaker of Cantonese and Hakka, and has some literacy skills in Chinese. There is strong pressure from her husband to learn to read and write English as they hope to open their own take-away bar. Shao Tse is quick to master new sounds but has great difficulty in mastering writing skills, especially in tracking from left to right.

Mulyruth Meong is a single Cambodian woman, aged 22, who is employed as a machinist in a small garment factory. She had four years' schooling in Cambodia and is semi-literate in Khmer. Her command of spoken English is reasonable; she has a slight accent and some difficulty with 'th' and 'w' sounds. Since she wants to be able to read and write in English for future advancement at work, she is highly motivated but finds it difficult to concentrate for any period of time. She is good at learning vocabulary lists.

Chanty Heng is a Cambodian widow of 19 with a two-year-old son. She is having difficulty adjusting to living in New Zealand as she has not got over the death of her husband and other members of her family. She has a good command of Khmer but only a limited working knowledge of English in which she lacks self confidence. Her reasons for learning English are two fold : to be able to manage her own affairs, and to be able to talk about her experiences.

Language Needs

thú vật TĀLŌFA ꯑꯩ

diez por ciento ꯲꯱꯶꯸ꯋꯥ

BACKGROUND

Home tutoring offers the opportunity to tailor ESL programmes to meet the language needs of the individual. However, you have only a brief one-to-two-hour lesson a week in which to increase the learner's skills.

The pre-literate ESL learner faces a double challenge. The first is to understand and use spoken English, and the second is to learn to recognise the written word.

The major concern is that the language work introduced through the four skills of listening and speaking, reading and writing should be meaningful and relevant. Before selecting words or language patterns to teach, ask these questions :

Will the student need to understand this?
Will the student need to say this?
Will the student need to read this?
Will the student need to write this?

In general, students want help in

Speaking and listening to others.
Increasing their vocabulary.
Learning to read and write.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

In order to be competent in spoken English, a student needs to be able to do some of the following things:

1. Answer questions

   What's your name?
   Where do you come from?
   How long have you been in N.Z.?
   When did you come to N.Z.?
   Where do you live?
   Where do you work?
   Do you speak English?
   Where is .....?

2. Give information

   I don't understand, sorry.
   I understand a little.
   I've been here ..... months.
   I'm not very well.

3. Exchange small talk

   How are you?
   Not so bad.
   It's cold, isn't it?

4. Understand requests

   Get, bring, look at, turn on, pass me, bring.....

5. Understand directions

   Turn left / right
   Across the street, round the corner, upstairs....
   Here, there / like this, this way, that way

INCREASING VOCABULARY

The vocabulary suggested here is not meant to be used in any particular order nor will it be possible to teach it all until your student is ready for it. However, recognition of some individual words is crucial for pre-literate learners.

Function words

Prepositions - to, on, in, down, up, under
Conjunctions - and, but
Articles - a, an, the

Substitute words

I, you, she, he, it, me, they, my

Content words

Nouns related to topics: jobs and work places, clothing, places in the city, members of the family, rooms of a house, furniture, parts of the body, days of the week.

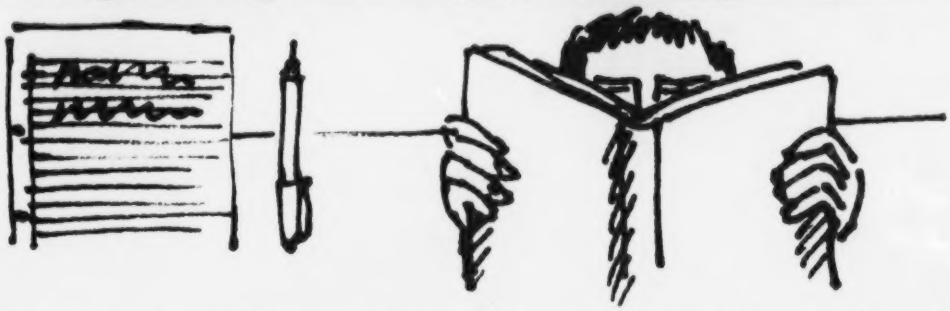
Verbs: be, have, do, don't, make, work, can, can't, go, get.

Adjectives: colours, hot/cold, tall/short, fat/thin, big/small, happy/sad, old/young, old/new, fast/slow, bad/good, cheap/expensive, hungry, thirsty, tired.

Learning to Read and Write

Topic	Reading Needs	Writing Needs
1. Personal identification	Forms	Name, signature, address, phone number, husband's name, children's names, yes-no
2. Occupation	Forms, time sheet, pay slip	Name, address
3. Transport	Bus tickets, timetables, bus numbers and destinations	
4. Shopping	Prices, sizes, specials, names and labels, bills	Shopping list
5. Eating and drinking	Snack-bar menu	
6. Health and welfare	Surgery visiting hours, appointments, medicine bottles, emergency (111), forms (doctor, dentist, hospital, welfare allowances)	Names, addresses, yes-no
7. Education	Enrolment forms, school notes	Names, addresses, notes to teacher
8. Free time	T.V., Listener, knitting/sewing patterns	
9. Services P.O. Telephone, Bank, motoring, Milkman, City Council	Forms, money orders, uses of public telephones, telephone directories, cheque/savings account, car repairs, notices	Names, addresses, telephone number
10. Safety	Warning signs, road signs, safety signs at work.	
11. The city	Social sight words	

Preparing to Read and Write



Training in listening and visual skills helps develop the sound-symbol relationship which the pre-literate adult needs to learn for recognising and writing the written word.

Through trial and error, learners produce their own system of pronunciation. When they speak and write, they produce the sounds they 'hear' which are sometimes the sounds of the mother tongue.

EXERCISES FOR AUDITORY PERCEPTION

The following exercises give the student practice in recognising sounds, words, phrases, simple statements and questions.

1. Identifying sounds and people

   a. Listen to the first and last sounds of familiar names and numbers. Which have the same beginning and ending? Which are different?

   b. Listen to a tape of a simple story with and without picture cards. Discuss what happens next.

   c. Listen to a taped conversation of two people talking. Say whether the speakers are the same or different people.

   d. Listen to a taped dialogue of questions and simple sentences. Recognise the intonation.

   e. Play Sound Lotto. The tutor calls out words. The learner finds the picture on the Lotto card and covers it.

   f. The tutor calls out times and the learner sets the clock.

   g. The learner speaks onto the tape.

2. Imitating

a. The tutor taps or claps the stress patterns of selected words for the student to imitate. Use visual reminders such as Oo doctor, OO bus stop, Ooo hospital.

b. The tutor calls out telephone numbers, ticket prices, place names. The learner repeats them.

3. Following directions

a. The tutor practises simple directions:
Turn on the jug. Pass me the sugar.

b. The tutor gives a sequence of spoken directions as for making pikelets.

4. Interpreting meaning

a. The learner gives a verbal or non verbal response to questions starting "Where is .....?" by short answers or by pointing.

b. Using a magazine picture, the tutor calls out words in pairs and asks the learner to point to the object which matches the right word.

5. Critical listening

As the lesson proceeds, the learner tapes responses to simple questions, then listens to the pronunciation. The tutor records a model answer to which the learner refers.

EXERCISES FOR VISUAL DISCRIMINATION

Matching, sorting, ordering and combining activities transfer well to literacy skills. Teach these pre-reading and pre-writing skills at the same time as you are teaching spoken English.

* Name things in a picture and then match objects with the picture.
* Cover 3/4 of the picture and see if the student can guess what it is. Uncover it slowly.
* Make simple jigsaws from magazine pictures.
* Cut up pictures of single items into two parts. The student matches the parts.
* Use food packets for sorting exercises.
* Use two similar advertisements and white-out details to make five differences. The learner points to the similarities first and then to the differences.
* Use hand signals to show left and right directions.
* Use 'sentences' of pronunciation marks for game of 'Odd-Man-Out'. e.g.
* Use simple map of the area for the learner to draw the route to the bus stop, shops, and so on with her finger.
* Use the environment to teach colour e.g. traffic lights.
* Use matching exercises with pictures of opposites e.g. tall man/short woman, happy boy/sad girl.
* Use stick figures and grids to teach left to right sequence.
* Take picture cards of clothing. The learner looks at them and turns them face down. The tutor asks for the man with the red jersey.
* The student has cards with initial letters to be matched with names of family members, addresses and so on.
* The learner has cards with the endings of names missing. Find the missing letters and match them with the model.
* Play snap, lotto with words and picture cards.

Teaching Reading

Before beginning to read words, phrases and simple sentences, the learner needs to understand the concept of same and different and to be familiar with the left to right sequence.

What you teach depends on the immediate needs of the learner. The amount able to be remembered may be only a few words per lesson as well as the topics being learned orally.

AIMS

The main objective in teaching pre-literates to read is to help learners meet the practical needs of daily life in their new country. The particular aims are to develop basic skills in word recognition and to show that the printed word contains a message. The learner's immediate goals will be to perform minimal literacy tasks and be able to review the lesson in written form during the week.

NEEDS

1. Minimal literacy needs:

- name and address
- local place names
- days of the week, months and their numbers (prices, sizes)
- labels on packets and bottles
- directions on medicine bottles
- social sight words

2. Need to review oral language.

APPROACHES

There is no one approach or method that teaches learners to read and write; a combination of approaches is beneficial. Three approaches are outlined here :

The whole word or sight word approach
The phonics approach
The language experience approach

1. Whole word approach
   a. This approach aims to develop a sight vocabulary of high interest value.
   b. Words are taught as a whole, on sight.
   c. The tutor begins with common, one-syllable words which students have already practised orally.
   d. The learner progresses from single words to phrases to simple sentences.
   e. Pictures have an important role in aiding understanding.

2. Phonics approach
   a. In English, the symbols (letters) generally stand for sounds. The phonic approach will help learners to see the sound-symbol relationship that words have.
   b. Tutor uses short exercises to identify initial sounds and letters and then final sounds and letters, starting with words that the learner already recognises.
   c. The learner finds other words that start or end with that sound.
   d. The phonic approach helps some learners by providing them with a method of word attack when they see new words, and by helping them see the difference when sight words are similar.

3. Language Experience approach

a. The language experience story uses learners' experiences as the theme and can be as short as two sentences.

b. The learner tells of incidents relating to daily life.

c. The tutor writes it and then reads it to the learner pointing to the words.

d. The learner reads it and re-reads it before copying it into a workbook.

e. The tutor tapes it for the learner to listen to and read for homework.

f. New words are put on cards and used with illustrations. These are taught as whole words and with a phonic approach if necessary.

g. Put phrases like [It's] [We're] [I'm] [I went] in different colours on the card. Use these to make sentences next time.

h. Record the new words under topics in the workbook. These words can be entered under a first letter list. Give examples of the word in context and illustrate them.

TECHNIQUES

Don't use a method that puts too much burden on the learner or that takes the fun out of learning to read. If the learner is having difficulties, focus on what can be done and then on what cannot.

* Use stick-on labels to name objects in the house, food, tools, etc. The learner matches the stick-on with the objects.

* For opposites, write words in different colours on two cards
  [hot] (red) [cold] (white)

* Use large cards for shop signs and small cards for objects. Sort them into categories.

* Write signs (street, building, bus) on picture cards for the learner to repeat. Match the picture card with the signs on separate cards. The tutor cuts up the word and the learner matches it with the original. The learner reads without looking at the original. Check by getting the learner to pick the word out of a group of words. The learner then copies it.

* Draw a map of the area with signs in place.

* When the learner recognises a sign of two words as a whole the tutor cuts up the sign into individual words for building other words.
e.g. [NO] [ENTRY] [NO] [SMOKING] Substitute one word at a time.

* Use the cutting up technique to show that sentences used in language experience stories are made up of separate words. The learner puts the sentence together again but always with a model to copy from.

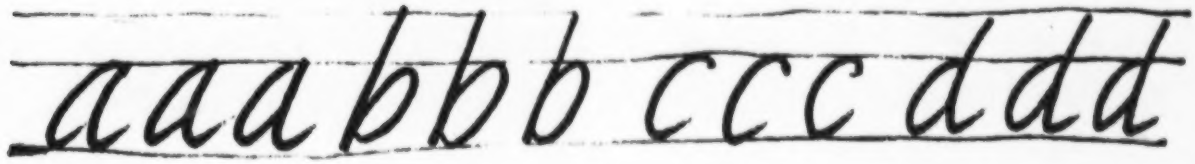
* When new interest words are difficult, put the word into simple English which the learner already knows. Use flash cards but then make the connection back to the context.

* Rather than telling the learner what the new word is, let her think about it and guess it with the help of actions or pictures. Ask a question like "Is this word X?"

* For following simple directions e.g. medicine dosages, use stick figures and real objects. Use cards with the simple substitution technique. [Take] [3] [pills] [3 times] [a day]
The learner checks with model sentences.

* Read to the learner often. Point to the words as you read. Stop and ask the learner to guess the next word or to predict the ending.

Teaching Writing



Writing helps the eye and ear to memorise both oral vocabulary and sentence forms. It also gives the learner the opportunity to learn the language and digest it at his own pace.

The learner comes to see that learning to write in English serves useful purposes such as filling out forms and cheques, keeping a record of lessons and eventually writing notes and letters.

Giving personal information is the most essential language function the learner will have to perform. A good idea at the early stage of learning, is to give the learner a card to carry with this important information on it.

Aims

The tutor's main objective in teaching pre-literates to read is to give the learner the independent means of identifying himself or herself for form-filling and to provide a foundation of early writing skills. The learner's immediate goals are to learn to write the Latin alphabet, name and address and to have a means of reviewing what has been taught in the lesson.

Needs

Minimal writing needs are

- letter forms
- name, signature
- husband / wife's name
- children's names
- address
- numbers
- shopping list

The student also needs to copy phrases and simple sentences for review and to write simple messages.

LETTER FORMATION

Before beginning to write the letters of the Latin alphabet, the learner should understand the left to right progression, have good eye and hand co-ordination, and be able to follow on a line. You may need to show the learner how to sit with the paper and the right arm pointing to eleven o'clock.

First steps

1. Print the learner's name, saying it as you write. The learner can watch and imitate the movements in the air.

2. The learner traces her name with a pen, overwriting and then copying it.

3. The student continues copying her name until she can write it from memory as a single unit. She can refer to a model of the alphabet which shows how to form the letters.

4. To check, give the learner her name with one missing letter to fill in but with a model in front of her.

5. The learner transfers her name to a very simple form.

6. Ask the student to find her name in a group of names.

The Alphabet

It is not necessary to teach the whole A - Z when the learner does not know any words which contain all these letters. By learning name and address and other relevant words, the learner is introduced to the small and the capital letters as they are needed. The English is only partly phonetic. This concept may be new to the student. Pre-literate learners become confused about what letters are, what sounds are and what words are. Teach the literacy vocabulary - letter, word, sound, large, small, line as you go.

TEACHING TECHNIQUES

* Use a matching exercise. Spread two sets of letters which the learner has met, face down on the table. Take turns to turn over the cards and match them with family names.

* For learners who continue to have difficulty with letter forms, make up exercises of joining the dots and tracing the letters for homework.

* Repeat the steps for writing the names of the rest of the family, addresses and friends' names. Encourage the learner to write in words rather than letters.

* Use the 'copy, cover and compare' technique for practising these names for homework.

* Keep a series of forms, two of each. Discuss the purpose of each form, the way it is used and filled in. Get forms from the Post Office, bank, Social Welfare Department, dentist, doctor and employer.

* The learner can make up a shopping list by copying words from topics into a workbook and from advertisements.

* The learner can tell the tutor a sentence about a picture or cartoon. The tutor writes it underneath the picture and the learner copies it.

* Use the language experience approach to make stories for writing.

* A simple letter can be used to integrate all the skills practised so far. It can also show the meaning of writing for communicative purposes.
    a) Ask the learner to address an envelope to a friend
    b) The learner writes the address and date
    c) Dear _____,
    d) The learner dictates then copies the body of the letter
    e) Close the letter.

Resources

PICTURES

a. Ask the learner to collect pictures, advertisements, newspaper photos, and pamphlets of interest.

b. Build up your own library pictures relating to topics. Write down the language patterns you want to elicit from the picture.

c. Ask questions that will elicit particular language items from the learner such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, prepositions.

'What can you see?'	- nouns
'What's he doing?'	- verbs
'What colour is it?'	- adjectives
'Is it big?'	- opposites
'Where is it?'	- prepositions

d. From the short answers make up simple phrases and sentences.
He's going to the bank on the corner.

e. Ask questions which relate the picture to the learner.
Do you go to that Bank?
Has this ever happened to you?

f. Ask questions that will elicit the implied meaning in the picture.
'What do you think this means?'

TAPES

Tapes give pre-literate ESL learners the opportunity to learn at their own pace and to gain more exposure to the sounds of English.
Here are some ways of using tapes.

a. Record vocabulary items as you work through the lesson and get the learner to give a mother tongue translation after the English.

b. For listening practice, use the tape to present different voices and accents.

c. When you leave written material with the tape, make sure that it is accompanied by visual props.

d. Use the tape for encouraging the learner to read in phrases, in 'chunks' of meaning, rather than words individually. Use the learner's stories. T.V. ads, radio news items, and so on for this.

e. Use the tape for pronunciation and fluency. Give the model and leave 5 seconds to repeat the word(s) after you. Listen to the practice tape at the beginning of the next lesson to see which sounds still need attention.

GAMES

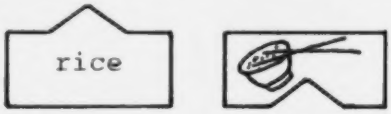
Choose activities for practising, checking and revising language items the learner has already met.

* Dominoes - picture:picture, word:word, letter:letter.
* Kim's Game
* Guess the use
* Word Association
* Play Snap or Concentration with packet labels

* Spinning for Food. You and your student have four cards each with a picture of food on it. Spin the top and call out 'Can I have a / some _____ please?' The student must find the right card before the top stops spinning. Reverse roles.

* Big Eaters. The tutor writes a 'menu', as the learner says what the family eats for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

* Remembering Give the learner a few minutes to study a topic picture then see how much he can remember.

* Matching. Make matching words and picture cards. If used with notches, they can be self-correcting and used for homework
e.g. 

* Pair game with signs on one side and the picture on the other. For homework, the learner can play this with another family member. Check by looking at the picture while the other person reads the word.

* Guess what. Use a picture showing a scene in which an object is 'hidden'. The learner must ask questions such as 'Is it under the _____?'

* Whose is this? The tutor writes a list of family names and opposite this, a list of the learner's possessions. The learner draws lines matching the name and object, saying 'It's mine', 'It's Kiri's'.

* Rhyme Ping-Pong. The learner finds words that rhyme with others - fat/sat.

* I Spy. 'I spy with my little eye something beginning with 'M' like 'milk'.

* Anagrams. Using a picture as a clue, get your learner to unscramble jumbled-up words in boxes. 'rood'

Evaluation

CHECKING THE LESSON

Here are some questions to ask yourself at the end of a lesson.

1. How did you let your student know the objectives for the lesson? _____

2. What were the ways in which you held the student's attention?

   _____

3. Were there any things that seemed to make your student frustrated? _____

4. What was your most stimulating activity?

   _____

5. How often did you use repetition and revision?

   _____

6. What new skills or information did the student learn today?

   _____

7. How much time was spent talking about progress?

   _____

8. Which instructions did the student seem to find it hard to follow?

   _____

9. What does your student hope to learn in the next lesson?

   _____

STUDENT - TUTOR EVALUATION SHEET

Use this as a literacy checklist every 3 - 6 months.
Tick the items as appropriate.

Speaking and listening	Date	Date	Date
Can your learner			
Answer simple questions			
Ask simple questions			
Follow directions			
Talk about experiences			
Reading			
Can your learner			
Read his name			
Recognise his address			
Identify some letters of the alphabet			
Read social sight words (give the number)			
Read short phrases			
Guess a missing word from a sentence			
Read two-sentence stories			
Understand instructions on forms			
Read dosages			
Use a model letter to write to the school			
Recognise prices and bus numbers			
Writing			
Can your learner			
Make up sentences from word cards			
Write name and address			
Sign name			
Write husband/wife's name			
Copy sentences			
Fill in simple forms			
Complete a shopping list			
Record telephone numbers			

Further Resources

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